

# 5,000 honor murdered Panthers

By Clark Kissinger  
*Special to the Guardian*

Chicago

A sense of unity unparalleled in the black community has developed here in the aftermath of the slaying of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark.

Over 5000 people filed past the coffin of Illinois Black Panther party chairman Hampton in a memorial service last week.

Addressing the service, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, declared: "The nation that conquered Nazi Germany is following the same brutal course as Nazi Germany."

Looking down at Hampton's body, Abernathy emotionally intoned: "I want to tell you this, Freddy—you didn't die in vain. We're going to see to it that you did not die in vain. But I don't think you'll rest in peace, Freddy, because there isn't going to be any peace."

Hampton, 21 and Clark, 22, were cut down in a police raid on a Panther office-residence in the early hours of Dec. 4. Four other party members were wounded. Police claim self-defense, but increasing evidence points to murder.

Thousands of black Chicagoans have been admitted to the apartment to view the bullet holes in the wall, the bloody bed where Hampton was slain and other evidence in the building pointing to contradictions in the official police story.

Black students at a number of high schools staged mass walkouts to attend the memorial. At Harrison High School, 1400 students walked out after the school principal refused to allow a memorial service for Hampton and Clark.

About 150 then marched to police headquarters to protest the slayings.

The day after the memorial, the Panthers conducted a news conference, gave details of the assassination revealed for the first time and produced evidence demonstrating there was no "shootout," as police claimed, but a "shoot-in."

Bobby Rush, acting chairman of the Illinois Black Panther party, said that state attorney Edward Hanrahan, who ordered the raid, Richard J. Jolovec, chief of Hanrahan's special prosecution unit and judge Robert Collins, who issued the search order for the raid, "conspired to murder" the Panthers along with 14 policemen who raided the apartment.

Rush said a truckload of state's attorney police, armed with machineguns, waited outside the apartment until the lights were turned out inside. He said Sgt. Daniel Groth, who led the raiding party, went to the back door. When someone inside asked, "Who is it?" Groth answered, "Tommy." Asked, "Tommy who?" Groth replied, "Tommy gun." With that, Rush said, police broke into the front and back doors, firing wildly. Clark was slain almost immediately.

"Where's Hampton—is he dead?" shouted policeman James Davis. "I don't know," replied another cop. "He's still in the bedroom." Davis, according to Rush, raced into the bedroom, fired shots and emerged moments later, commenting, "Well, if he wasn't dead then, he's dead now."

Rush stated that the Panthers did not engage in a gunfight and that the police did all the shooting. The entire episode took five minutes.

A split seems to have developed in Chicago's ruling class over the murder. On one side is the ultra-reactionary Chicago Tribune, which has become a virtual spokesman for Hanrahan and the police. On the other are the Marshall Field newspapers (the Sun Times and Daily News), less reactionary elements and liberals such as Sen. Charles Percy, Adlai Stevenson 3rd and several Congressmen. The Tri-

bune and its followers adhere to the police version of the killings but have been forced to accept the inevitability of an outside investigation—though the object would be an investigation which would support the official story and stop the criticism. The other side maintains an investigation must be independent of the Chicago police. Their concern is that the police account is so transparent that unless liberals take the lead in criticism it may fall into more radical hands who might be able to galvanize the black community into taking action.

The day following Rush's revelations, the Tribune ran a page 1 "exclusive" purporting to substantiate the police report

with new details. Hanrahan had given the Tribune police photographs and allowed the newspaper to interview police who made the raid, a courtesy he did not extend to the Field papers.

The photos showed the back door with holes in it, indicating the Panthers fired from the inside; the front door with a large hole in it, allegedly from a shotgun blast from inside and a bathroom door punctured with bullet holes, said to have been fired by Panthers.

The next day the Field papers demonstrated the descriptions of the photos were phoney. The holes in the back door turned out to be nails, the hole in the front door was shown to be from entry, not exit and the "bathroom door" turned out to be a bedroom door open at the time of the raid and hit by police machinegun fire coming through the bedroom wall.

The first legal confrontation is likely to take place this week at the coroner's inquest. The Cook County coroner—described as a "machine hack"—has been asked by the Chicago Bar Association to step aside so a special coroner can be appointed in this case.

Six of the seven survivors of the police "search and destroy" attack are still in jail. Contributions for bail and to help the Chicago party may be sent to 2350 W. Madison St., Chicago, Ill. 60612.



Three of 21 Los Angeles prisoners, apprehended four days after Chicago murders.